

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 OES-03 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

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FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3935

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: BELIZE-U.S. FOOT AND MOUTH AGREEMENT

SAN JOSE FOR DRS. MASON AND WEATHERSBY

GUATEMALA FOR AGATT

1. ON JANUARY 15 DR. GERALD MASON, USDA ADISOR TO BELIZE, DR. JOSE FERRER, CHIEF OF ANIMAL HEALTH OIRSA AND DR. BALMORE SILVA, PRINCIPAL GOB VETERINARY OFFICER, MADE A ROUTINE SURVEY OF LOCAL STORES FOR PROHIBITED ITEMS. THEY FOUND FRESH FROZEN BEEF AND PORK SAUSAGE IMPORTED FROM ENGLAND AND FRESH FROZEN BACON FROM DENMARK AT A LOCAL SUPERMARKET. BOTH DR. MASON AND I REPORTED THIS TO APPROPRIATE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS (DR. MASON BY LETTER AND I IN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE CALL), AND I WAS ASSURED THAT THE PROMPT REMOVAL OF THESE ITEMS WOULD BE EFFECTED. ON FEBRUARY 19, DR. MASON AGAIN INSPECTED THE SAME MARKET AND FOUND THE SAME ITEMS AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. I WROTE AND HAD HAND DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING DAY A LETTER TO THE PREMIER EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS VIOLATION AND ADVISING HIM OF THE REAL EFFECTS CONTINUED VIOLATION COULD HAVE ON BELIZE'S EXPORTS OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS.

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2. ON FEBRUARY 28 I RECEIVED A REPLY FROM THE PREMIER ACKNOW-

LEDGING THE "OVERSIGHT" AND SAYING THAT HE HAD "REQUESTED" THE REMOVAL OF THE PROHIBITED ITEMS FROM STOCKS UNTIL "I FINALIZE PLANS FOR THEIR TAKE-OVER AND NECESSARY COMPENSATION." HE THEN WENT ON TO ASK WHETHER "YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO HELP US MEET THE COST OF BZE DOLS 24,651.92 (APPROXIMATELY US DOLS 15,000) FOR COMPENSATION."

3. I ASSUME THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO REPLYING NEGATIVELY TO PREMIER'S REQUEST. HOWEVER, BEFORE DOING SO, I WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING FROM ADDRESSEES WHETHER THERE ARE ANY FUNDS WE MIGHT TAP TO ASSIST GOB IN DEALING WITH THIS MATTER. ALSO, SINCE NOTHING APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DONE TO PREVENT FURTHER IMPORTS OF PROHIBITED ITEMS, I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE ADDRESSEES MIGHT OFFER ON PRECISELY WHAT PROCEDURES GOB SHOULD BE ADVISED TO ESTABLISH IN ORDER TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF THIS EPISODE. GAWF

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